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From: Science Space and Tech Committee Press SST Press
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SST Committee Approves the *American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act of 2017*

WASHINGTON - The U.S. House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology today unanimously approved H.R. 2809, the *American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act of 2017*, as the bill now moves to the full U.S. House of Representatives for consideration. Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas), Space Subcommittee Chairman Babin (R-Texas), Rep. Jim Bridenstine (R-Okla.), and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) praised the bill's passage:

Chairman Smith: "The United States space enterprise is positioned to take the lead in commercial space exploration as this historic bill moves forward to the House for consideration. Today's committee vote signals our commitment to complying with our international obligations, reforming our commercial remote sensing system, and welcoming new space operators. With committee approval of the American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act, we are one step closer to implementing an innovative,

transparent, and streamlined structure for authorizing and supervising space activity while imposing minimal burdens on stakeholders. I appreciate the support from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I look forward to working hand and hand with leadership to bring this to a House floor vote.”

Space Subcommittee Chairman Babin: “The American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act is a common-sense bipartisan bill that streamlines regulatory processes, limits burdensome government intrusion, promotes American innovation and investment, protects national security, and satisfies our international obligations. For several years, we have heard concerns from stakeholders that they need greater regulatory certainty to attract investment and succeed. I am pleased that the Committee has acted to address these concerns by passing this much-needed bill.”

Rep. Bridenstine: “The American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act provides certainty to industry by creating a clear, transparent, and minimally burdensome process for commercial space activities. It also reforms the broken system of remote sensing licensing that is overly restrictive, thwarts industry, and hands an advantage to foreign competitors.”

Leader McCarthy: “The future of space exploration is now and the commercial space industry has a vital role to play. Our current regulatory regime discourages private sector investment in the commercial space industry, which threatens the industry’s development and global standing. In order to ensure America’s commercial space industry maintains its competitiveness, we need to create a pro-growth environment through regulatory certainty and this legislation continues our recent work to do just that.”

Background

The *American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act of 2017* simplifies and strengthens the outdated space-based remote sensing regulatory system. At the same time, this bill enhances U.S. compliance with international obligations, improves national security and removes regulatory barriers facing new and innovative space companies.

This bill will:

- Create a single authority for U.S. authorization and supervision of nongovernmental space activities located at the Department of Commerce Office of Space Commerce
- Establish a transparent certification process in the least burdensome manner possible
- Provide greater certainty to assure nongovernmental space activities conform to the United States' Outer Space Treaty obligations
- Address concerns that certified activities may pose a safety risk to existing federal government space systems
- Reform the space-based remote sensing regulatory process
- Preserve ability to condition remote sensing operations to protect national security
- Enhance national security by ensuring insight into operations and capabilities by creating a competitive environment that discourages offshoring

The *American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act of 2017* was first introduced on June 7, by Chairman Smith along with Reps. Babin and Bridenstine.

Cosponsors of this legislation include: Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D-Colo.), Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-Ill.), Rep. Randy Weber (R-Texas), Rep. Clay Higgins (R-La.), and Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-Wash.).

Text of the bill can be found [here](#).

List of growing support for the bill can be found [here](#).

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